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ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC.

IF to diffuse sacred science, to cultivate the knowledge of God and his Church, and to render the "way of salvation" not only clear, but "lovely," either merit commendation, or be attended with utility; the Editors of the Churchman's Magazine undoubtedly have the favourable regard and encouragement of the Public.

"Smooth words" and "deceitful speeches, whereby the unwary are deceived," are not to be met with in this Miscellany—its language is decidedly the language of truth—and its words the same as those of the Prophets, our Lord and his Apostles. Unwilling to "trouble Herod, or to disturb Jerusalem;" in clear and obvious language we conduct our readers to the birth-place of the Messiah—to Mount Calvary—to the opening tomb—to witness the Ascension; and to join the company of the faithful disciples, in order to continue stedfast in their "doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

"Stedfastness in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers,"—is a prominent characteristic of the Episcopal Church, of which the Editors and most of the readers of this Miscellany glory in being members. Like her blessed Head, the Church continues the same;—and whether she be clothed in the garments of mourning and affliction, or decked with the robes of joy and temporal splendor;—still she is the same. She enjoys the same sacraments and services;—uses in her public assemblies the same holy scriptures;—perpetuates the same order of priesthood, and strongly leans upon the most gracious promise of her blessed Redeemer—"Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

OUR Lord pronounces *Peter* a *rock*—and afterwards acting in their true characters, *Peter and John seemed to be pillars;*—copying their example, the Editors of this publication study how they may best contribute to the edification of the Church, without giving offence to those "who are without." Amidst so great a multiplicity of opinions as checquer the face of religion in the United States, it is impossible but that a decisive illustration of some truths must displease. For this we are not responsible; "we speak as unto wise men,"—and intreat them to read attentively and dispassionately, before they pass a judgment on "what we say." Truth is unchangeable. Like provident householders, "we bring out of our treasures things new and old;"—and trust to the blessing of God upon our labours.

AFTER these honest declarations, the Editors return their sincere thanks to their Clerical and Lay brethren for their several communications, and request a continuance of their favours. It verily is the duty of every faithful son of the Church, be his station in the same what it will, to co-operate with every design evidently calculated to promote the glory of God, and the edification of his people. The Editors would be thankful for Anecdotes, or Sketches of the lives of eminent men of our Communion, whether Ecclesiastics or not—their wise sayings, and excellent traits of character ought not to be lost. It would greatly add to the utility of the present work that our correspondents would favour us with the origin, progress, &c. of the several Churches in Connecticut, or in the other states also. Nor ought the Magazine to be unadorned with the names of those worthies, who, by their donations to the Church, and other pious purposes, though dead, still speak to the living by their good deeds—and call upon them to "go and do so likewise." We shall be pleased to insert all remarkable discoveries, whether natural or artificial; and whatever tends to magnify the works of God, and render his holy word honourable.

IN fine, actuated by a due sense of high responsibility, the Editors hope, with the help of God, to confirm more and more such of their readers as already are partakers of the Apostolic faith, by furnishing them with the most persuasive arguments in favour of their holy religion, and by enabling them in the most unequivocal and decided manner to give a proper answer to every one "that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them;" and also, to satisfy those who belong not to the Episcopal Church, that we are steady to follow the steps of the primitive Christians, and hold fast "the words of truth and soberness." For we have not followed cunningly devised fables—and *if* our Episcopacy be an error, we think ourselves perfectly safe by being found at the

last day, in company with the Apostles, and their successors in the Church. Our hearty prayer to God is, that he would direct all men into the reception and acknowledgment of the truth; that, as there is but ONE SHEPHERD, there may be but ONE FOLD, to the glory of God the Father, the joy of God the Redeemer, and the honour of God the Sanctifier;—Three Persons in one undivided Godhead.

REFLECTIONS
ON THE COMMENCEMENT OF A NEW YEAR.

ST. LUKE, ch. xiii....v. 8.—Lord, let it alone this year also.

TRUTHS of the greatest interest to us, and those which we cannot but confess to be such, are yet the most generally slighted, and treated as if we had no concern at all in them. Trifles and vanities, far beneath the consideration of a rational being, are pursued with avidity; while matters, which concern our eternal gain, or utter misery, are contemned with a stupid indifference, or put off to a distant period, which we may never enjoy. All men unite in one complaint on the shortness and uncertainty of human life; but how few are there who so husband their time, and improve their opportunities, as to be able to look forward into futurity with the serenity of a contented mind, and with the expectation of a good conscience?

When, therefore, we stand upon the eminence which brings us to the prospect of a new year, it behoves us to look back upon that which is past, with a scrutinizing eye, and to examine the steps we have measured therein, with seriousness and impartiality.

The year which is expired, is one more taken from the number allotted to us, by HIM who will require of us an account of the improvement which we have made in our probationary state. What number of years we may yet occupy in this world, is known to HIM only; but this we know, that the remainder of our span is now contracted within narrower limits, and we cannot but view the circle as drawing us nearer and nearer to the world of spirits. The years which we have already numbered now appear, in contemplation, very few. Memory can indeed retrace numerous incidents and connections which were once important and dear to us, but which now have no other relative existence or effect, than in our melancholy idea, or perhaps in our mortifying reflection. But how painful is the remembrance of headstrong imprudencies, of errors that never can be amended, of momentary follies which have embittered a great part of our lives; of days, and months, and years, squander-

ed in idleness or dissipation; of opportunities of improvement, and seasons of grace neglected and despised; of warnings unheeded, and of providences abused. Who is there in this momentous hour of observation, if he dispassionately attend to the dictates of conscience, can say, that in any or all of these particulars, he is clear of *self-condemnation?*

Every man who lays his hand upon his heart, as in the presence of the all-seeing Judge of human thoughts and human actions, will, when he balances the various and immense benefits with which he has been favoured, against his numerous sins of omission and commission, confess with a penitential tear, that "he hath indeed been what is described so forcibly in the parable of the fig-tree, a mere cumberer of the ground."

In this parable we may learn the instructive lesson of humility, repentance and caution, while it at the same time affords us a most consolatory view of the divine mercy and forbearance. It is true the parable, as related by our blessed Lord, primarily relates to the visitation of the Jews by the Messiah, and the long suffering of God towards that sinful nation, from which he continued, year after year, to look for the fruits of righteousness. But this most expressive parable has also a plain application to individuals who, planted in the vineyard of the Church, and blessed with all the means of grace it affords, are of course expected to make a suitable return for the favours bestowed upon them, by bringing forth to the glory of God their Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier. The picture, here represented, is a very alarming one. It is not said that the *fig-tree* brought forth *pernicious* fruits; but that it was utterly barren, repaid not the cost and labour expended upon it, by corresponding marks of fertility, and was "merely a cumberer of the ground."

Alas! how many persons are there of this description in the Christian Church, who bear the semblance of goodness to their fellow-creatures, because they appear harmless and inoffensive. But they manifest no *positive* virtues. They bring forth no fruits of holiness. They do not serve God in their generation, by promoting his cause in the world. They are not actively and openly on the Lord's side, fighting against sin: they are perhaps favourable to good principles and to good morals, but they are not seen exercised in the season of corruption and infidelity, on the side of truth and righteousness; and even in a private station they do not shew an eminently bright example. They are not lights set upon an hill, by which it may be seen in what their genuine character consists. On the contrary, they temporize with the sinful customs of the world. They are indifferent to the progress of truth or error. Their families are not distinguished by devotion. Little pains are taken in the religious care and instruction of their children; and a small thing will lead them to the neglect of the most sacred institutions. In short, it matters little where their *negative character* may be; this is obvious, that in a religious point of view, they are not "living branches of the true vine."

It is certainly an unpleasant thing to deal thus plainly with a great part of those who make up the body of professing Christians; but it is to be considered that our religion is a religion of *life* and *activity*, not of *notion*, *sentimentality*, or *mere moral decency*. It demands of its followers a separation from all worldly corruptions, and the exercise of the opposite virtues; a circumspect watchfulness over their tempers, thoughts, words and actions; a continued spirit of benevolence and charity; a regular discharge of private and social duty; and an habitual intercourse with heaven by meditation, religious study, and prayer.

Now, if in these essential points, which constitute the life of Christianity, we are found wanting, and therefore are regarded by the sovereign householder as "cumberers of the ground;" what will be their condition in the future state, who have brought forth "*evil fruits?*" Where will they appear, who, not content with an *indolent* life, have openly and habitually trampled upon every virtuous and religious principle? If the mere "cumberers of the ground," with a fair shew and character, shall yet suffer the sentence of excision, dreadful indeed will be the doom of those who have added presumptuous guilt to sinful negligence.

Let it then be seriously considered at this interesting season, "in which our Saviour Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility;" that the day of grace opened by his incarnation and passion, yet remains for our admission into the divine favour, through his merits and intercession. Let the consolation suggested by this consideration, lead us to take a humble view of ourselves; and in the true spirit of repentance, bring us to the footstool of divine grace for the pardon of our misdeeds. And when we consider how "few and evil our days have been," and how uncertain the remainder of them is, let the consideration fix in our minds a principle of caution and holy resolution with regard to our future conduct.

The voice of mediatorial intercession we may properly conclude is now soliciting in our behalf, "*Lord, let them alone* THIS YEAR *also!*" though they have hitherto been cumberers of the ground, and many of them grievous abusers of thy mercies, yet spare them a little longer, that thy judgments, now visibly abroad in the earth, and thundering so vehemently loud, may have the effect of bringing their minds to a sense of their errors, and leading them to newness of life. But if these should fail; if all the interpositions of heaven, in the way of love and of terror, shall prove of no avail—"*then after that thou shalt cut them down.*"

O. C. M.

JANUARY 1st.

THE CIRCUMCISION.

ST. LUKE, ch. ii....v. 21.

And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the Child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the Angel, before he was conceived in the womb.

THESE words conclude the gospel for the day, taken from a chapter which hath afforded ample matter of wonder and delight through the course of the present joyful season, when the Church, like the blessed Virgin Mother, is never seen, but with the holy child in her arms. By the portions already selected from it, we have been made to listen to the sermon preached by an angel upon the subject of the nativity; and the sweet notes of that anthem, sung by the choir of heaven immediately after, are still sounding in our ears. With the happy and obedient shepherds, we have been at Bethlehem, and there have seen "this great thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us;" and have found reason to return, like them, "glorifying and praising God for all the things that we have heard and seen, as it was told unto us." Nor shall we ever forget, it is to be hoped, (at least, never, at this hallowed and gracious time) to imitate *her* example, who "kept all these sayings, and pondered them in her heart."

We are now conducted from the birth to the circumcision of our Redeemer, an account of which immediately follows the history of the shepherds, in the words of the text. And very meet, and right, and our bounden duty it is, that we should at this time, and in this place, employ our thoughts upon it; seeing it was the beginning of sorrows to the Son of God, and the beginning of joy, because the beginning of redemption, to the sons of men, for whom the first blood of the all-propitiating victim was now shed. A stumbling block it may appear to the Jew, foolishness it may appear to the Greek, and to all those, who, like the one, desire a *sign* of earthly splendour and magnificence, or, like the other, seek for the *wisdom* of false philosophy: but to the intelligent, and therefore humble believer, Christ, in this state of weakness, pain, and sorrow, is "the wisdom of God" to contrive, "and the power of God" to effect the deliverance of his people.

It is observable, that whensoever, in the scriptures, mention is made of any particular relation to the abasement, the infirmity, and the shame, submitted to by Christ, it is presently contrasted by something concerning his exaltation, his power, and his glory; that so, the objection arising in the mind from a view of the former, may be obviated at once by the consideration of the latter, and the Christian may never lose sight of that capital

article of his faith, the union of the two natures, divine and human, in the person of his Saviour. Thus, we behold him in swaddling clothes; but instantly we hear the heavenly host singing an hallelujah to him. He lies in a manger; but the brightest star in the firmament points the way to his abode. He expires upon the cross; but all nature suffers with him, almost to a dissolution. And thus, in the instance now before us, he is circumcised indeed on earth, as the son of Abraham; but a name is given him from heaven, as the Son of God. For in these lowly and ignominious circumstances, he receives the name enjoined before to be imposed on him by the angel; a name above every name; a name which evil spirits fear, and good ones adore; a name at which every knee should rejoice to bow, and which every tongue should exult to confess; since it is by this name, that glory is given to God in the highest, peace restored to earth at war with its maker, and good will streams forth to sinful men. *Bishop Horne.*

THERE is no other Name given to men under heaven, whereby they are to be saved, but only the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ! —to whom be ascribed glory, honour, dominion and praise, by the Church visible and invisible, by angels, principalities and powers—and by every part of the creation, now in time—and throughout eternity. Amen and amen.

SUBJECTS OF MEDITATION,

PROPER FOR THIS SEASON.

"THE law was given by Moses: but grace and truth came by JESUS CHRIST;" "who is God over all—blessed forevermore." Amen.

"Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."

"If any man sin, we have a propitiation with the Father, even JESUS CHRIST the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins."

"The law worketh wrath."

"Come to me (saith the gracious Redeemer) all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

"Charge the people, lest they break through and gaze."

" Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world!"

" Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin."

" And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called Jesus."—" He was named Jesus, because he saves his people from their sins."

THE CHILD JESUS,
THE PATTERN OF EARLY PIETY.

ST. LUKE, ch. ii....v. 52.

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.

WHEN we thus speak of the Son of the Most High God, of the Saviour and Redeemer of mankind, it is with impressions of the profoundest reverence. He certainly stood not in need of previous culture and discipline to fit him for glory. The rays of divinity shone around him from the hour of his birth, with a native, original lustre. What is therefore recorded of his early piety was not to explain to us the spotless innocence of his life, but to furnish to mankind an example and pattern for their imitation, to set before us the beauty of holiness, and invite us to pursue the same path, which he has gone before us, in the attainment of every imitable excellence.

Other creatures arrive at that perfection of stature, which Providence allows them, without exertion; but the whole of man's existence is a state of discipline and progression. Youth is his preparation for maturer years, and his whole life a preparation for the next. The soil is given us, but the cultivation and improvement of it depends, under God, on our own labour. The neglected ground will be certainly overrun with weeds. Experience teaches, that where a foundation is not laid in the early period of life, little proficiency is to be expected; both in the natural and the moral world a plentiful harvest depends on a kindly spring. Autumn blossoms seldom ripen into fruit. If the soil is not softened and prepared at that critical season—if the early pushes after knowledge receive a check—if the fair buds and blossoms of true wisdom wither and decay, there is but feeble hope that they will afterwards revive and flourish, and quicken into fruit.

If therefore we desire that our children should copy after the pattern of Jesus, who *increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man*—let parents, public teachers and guardians of youth unite in *training them up in the way they should go, and when old they will not depart from it*;—and their work and labour of love shall not be in vain in the Lord.

THE EPIPHANY.

JANUARY 6.

There shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious.

Isaiah xi. *v.* 10.

IN the family of Noah, the true religion was universal, or catholic. It continued to be so, till the days of Abraham, when the general apostacy of the nations to idolatry made it necessary that a family should be called forth, and separated from the pollution that was in the world, to be the happy instrument of preserving faith upon the earth, "till the seed should come, to whom the promise was made." By this step in the divine dispensations it was never intended to "put the candle under a bushel, but to place it on a candle-stick," and there to keep it burning, that it might give light to those that were in the house, and to those who should enter into it. Many from time to time did enter; and therefore many more might have entered in, had it so pleased them. The transactions of God with his chosen people were not carried on in a corner; and there was no period, in which he left himself without witness among the nations round about them. Let us take a cursory view of the divine proceedings in this light only.

Of Abraham's call, the inhabitants of the country from which he was called, and, in consequence of that call, departed for ever, could not have been ignorant; and as many as were disposed to obey the admonition of heaven, might, doubtless, have had permission to attend him.

The patriarchal families, in their sojournings, travelled through many of the countries inhabited in those early ages. By the kings of those countries we find them treated with reverence, and acknowledged to be prophets, nay, "mighty princes of God." The story of their divine call and destination must have been the subject of conversation, wherever they came, nor would they be backward to make it so. They would, of course, communicate to others what heaven had communicated to them. They would exhort men, as they went, to save themselves from that untoward generation. That such conversations, and such exhortations were not without fruit, we may conclude from the mention that is made of "the souls which they had gotten in Haran," or the persons they had converted, and adopted into the holy family. The behavior of Abimelech and his subjects is very observable, and shews that there was, even among *them*, a sense and fear of God, which, it is to be apprehended, we might now look for in vain, in countries calling themselves *Christian*.

The deliverance of Abraham's brother Lot, and the unparallelled overthrow of the cities of the plain, by fire from heaven,

must have been a very awakening and affecting call to all within hearing.

In process of time, we find Egypt, then the most powerful and learned of nations, opening its hospitable arms to receive the family of Jacob, having owed its preservation, in the days of dearth, to one of that family, ordained, in a wonderful manner, "to save much people alive." Here the Church was settled, increased, and flourished for more than three hundred years, bearing testimony to the true religion, in the eye of the world.

Let any one consider the astonishing series of miracles wrought by Moses on a stage so public as this;—the passage through the Red Sea;—the destruction of Pharoah and his host;—the march of the Israelitish army, with the divine *shechina*, or *glory*, in the midst of it;—the awful and tremendous appearance on Mount Sinai at the promulgation of the law; their entrance into Canaan; the passage over Jordan; the fall of Jericho; the excision of the devoted nations;—could all these things be done, and the rumour of them not be spread, in those days, among the nations, both those that were near, and those that were afar off?

The fame of this distinguished and extraordinary people must have increased with their conquests, till universal peace was established in the days of Solomon. To this court the princes of the earth resorted; struck with his glory, charmed with his wisdom, and desirous of being instructed by him. Would you know the exalted sentiments they entertained of him, and of the people over whom he presided? Listen to the Queen of Sheba, speaking for them all.—"It was a true report that I heard in mine own land, of thine acts, and of thy wisdom. Howbeit, I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and behold, the half was not told me. Thy wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame which I heard. Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, who stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the Lord thy God, who delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel; because the Lord loved Israel, for ever, therefore made he thee King, to do judgment and justice."*

The mission of the prophet Jonah to preach repentance to the inhabitants of the great city Ninevah, the capital of the Assyrian empire, is an event, which deserves a place in your considerations, on the subject before us.

When the Babylonian power was at its height under Nebuchadnezzer, the people of God, for their transgressions, were carried into captivity by him. Reflect upon the very remarkable incidents to which that captivity gave birth; the interpretation of the monarch's dreams; the accomplishment of one of them, by his degradation, and subsequent restoration; the pre-

* "In Solomon's time there were 153,000 proselytes in the land of Israel, 2 Chr. 11, 17." See Fleury's history of the Israelites, part 2, ch. ix. p. 84.

servation of the three children in the furnace, and of Daniel in the den of lions; with the decrees in favor of the true religion, promulgated through the whole extent of that enormous empire, to which most of the kingdoms of the known world were at that time subject.

Upon the ruins of the Babylonian empire arose that of the Medes and Persians; the celebrated founder of which began his reign with the publication of a decree, for the return of God's chosen people to their own land, with leave to rebuild their city and temple.

The prosperity and felicity of Israel after their return from Babylon; the interview between the high priest Iaddus and Alexander the Great, when upon his march to the conquest of Persia, as it stands recorded by Josephus; the well known exploits of the Maccabees against Antiochus; the connection formed, about that period, between the Jews and the Romans; the translation of the scriptures into Greek, and the universal expectation produced thereby among the nations, of a ruler that should come out of Judea.

All these circumstances, though perhaps they are suffered, in the course of our reading, to glide by us unobserved, as they occur separately, and unconnected with each other; yet when they are thrown together, and duly weighed, may serve greatly to assist us in forming our judgment concerning the state of the Gentiles, and the testimony from time to time borne to the true religion, by the then Church of God, in the heathen world. Notwithstanding the light which God has been pleased to manifest, whether in former or in latter times, many, both individuals and nations, have still continued to sit in darkness, and the shadow of death. The fate of such, it is not our business to determine. One thing we know, and more we cannot, more we need not know; that in the last and great day, when that point and all others shall be finally settled, HE is to settle them, who, before men and angels, "will be justified in his saying, and clear "when he is judged." What mercy can do, mercy will do. All iniquity shall then stop her mouth, and no person that shall be condemned, will have power or reason to complain. To the curiosity, which, negligent of its own interest in Christ, is ever anxiously enquiring into the future dostination of those who never heard of him, the proper answer is—"What is that to thee? Follow thou me."

Let us then, whom God hath been graciously pleased to call into the number of his peculiar household, humbly meditate upon the prophecies concerning us—"Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee"—"All the ends of the earth shall remember themselves, and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before him." With such Isaiah abounds.—And for these distinguished mercies, let us evermore, on each returning Epiphany,

borrow the words of the Psalmist, and say, "Praise the Lord all ye heathen, praise him all ye nations; for his merciful kindness is ever more and more towards us, and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever."

ST. PAUL's CONVERSION,

JANUARY 25.

ST. PAUL is not commemorated, as the other apostles are, by his death or martyrdom, but by his *Conversion;* because it was highly beneficial to the Church of Christ; for, while other apostles had their particular provinces only, in the propagating of Christianity, he had "the care of all the Churches," and contributed to the preaching of the gospel throughout the world.

"And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus, to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus, and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven. And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?—And the Lord said unto him, Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth, and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man; but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus.

See the epistle for St. Paul's conversion, Acts ix.—*v.* 1, *&c.*

Some remarks on this history will we trust be acceptable to our readers.

1st.—"*To kick against the pricks.*"

To kick against the goad, was a proverb in ancient times, signifying a high degree of refractoriness and contempt of command.—So Aschylus Prometheus says, "*If thou wilt take my counsel, thou wilt never kick against the goad, for thou wilt bring more sufferings upon thyself by that means.*"—Parallel to this is *striking the adamant;—treading on the fire;* in Chrysostom. So again, *he that strikes the adamant, is himself stricken; and he that kicks the goad, is himself goaded.* Goads were used not only to urge on beasts to their labour, but slaves also. And *Plautus*

calls a slave severely treated by his master, in this way, *carnificinum cribrum*, a *kind of sieve full of holes.*—Hence the meaning of the expression is obvious.

2d.—"*Hearing a voice, but seeing no man.*"

What is here said of those that were with Paul, that *they heard the voice*, seems directly contrary to what is affirmed, ch. xxii. v. 9, *they heard not the voice.* The characters here referred to, were all Hebrews, and consequently the meaning of the words must be according to the Hebrew idiom.—The Hebrew word *kal*, signifies a *voice*, and also *thunder*. So in Heb. xii. 26—*Whose* (kal) VOICE *shook the earth;* that is, *whose* THUNDER *and lightnings* and VOICE of a trumpet exceeding loud, Exod. xix. 16.—St. Luke ix. 35, *Kai phōnē egeneto ek tēs nephelēs ;—And a voice was made out of a cloud, saying*, &c.—was thunder accompanied with an articulate sound of words—or a revelation from heaven given in thunder. John xii. 28, says—*(brontēn gegonenai)—it thundered*, and *an angel spake to him.* The Jews called this thunder, the BETH KOL, or daughter of a voice. This is fully explained by John in his Rev. iv, v. 5, where *brontai* and *phōnai* are both used in the same sentence, as in ch. x. v. 3—the seven THUNDERS delivered their VOICES. If, therefore, we understand *tēn phonēn* the *voice* to denote *thunder*, which was here joined to the *lightning* which shone or flashed about them; and understand the *(phōnēn lalountos moi)* the voice of him that spake to me, ch. xxii. 9, to be the VOICE of the angel speaking out of heaven, or out of the cloud;—we shall find no opposition in the several narratives of this divine interposition—but comprehend the joint import to be this:—Paul's companions saw the lightnings, heard the noise of the thunder, but heard not the articulate voice which came out of the thunder, the *Saul, Saul*, &c. the voice of JESUS speaking to him.

RITES AND CEREMONIES,

USED IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF BAPTISM IN THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

Continued from page 187....*Chap. VII.*

THE catechumens, when they were brought to the baptisticy of the Church, were indispensably obliged to perform three things.—1st, To make a formal and solemn *renunciation* of the devil. 2d, A *profession* of faith, in the words of some received creed. 3d, A *promise* or engagement to live in obedience to Christ, or the bye-laws and rules of the Christian religion: For though these were, in some measure, required of them

whilst they were under institution, yet now they were to be performed more publicly, and in the face of the congregation.

1st. The form of the *renunciation*, as delivered by the author of the apostolic constitutions, runs in these words:—"I renounce Satan and his works, and his pomps, and his angels, and his inventions, and all things that belong to him, or that are subject to him." Cyprian sometimes joins together the devil and the world, and so does St. Ambrose. The form in St. Jerome is—"I renounce thee, Satan, thy pomp, and thy vices, and thy world, which liveth in iniquity." And in Salvian, "I renounce the devil, his pomps, his shews, and his works;"—thereby intimating, that games and shews were a part of the devil's pomp. The council of Eliberis determined, that such *flamens* as only exhibited the shews to the people, though they did not sacrifice to the idols, should be cast out of the Church; and when all this idolatry was afterwards abolished, shews were still reputed amongst these unlawful pomps, which every Christian was supposed to renounce at his baptism.

The custom of making this renunciation, some derive from apostolical institution and practice, founding their assertion upon St. Paul's words to Timothy, 1st epist. vi. 12, *Lay hold on eternal life*, whereunto thou art called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses. The author of the comments under the names of St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, and Pelagius, thus interprets this place: "thou hast confessed a good confession in baptism by renouncing the world and its pomps, before many witnesses, before the priests and ministers, and the heavenly powers." Tertullian and Basil derive it not from any written word, but from tradition and the custom of the Church.

Some learned men think the form of renunciation made by way of question and answer, to have been so ancient in the Church, that St. Peter may be thought to refer to it, when he styles baptism *the answer of a good conscience towards God:* And this conjecture is not improbable, because there is nothing it can so well refer to, as that common custom of answering in baptism, *Dost thou renounce the devil*, &c.? "*I do renounce him.*"

As soon as baptisteries were built, particular places in them were appointed for this service. They commonly had two apartments; the *(proaulion) porch*, or *anti-room*, where they made their renunciations and confessions of faith; and the *Esōteron oikon*, or *inner room*, where the ceremonies of baptism were performed. When the catechumens were brought into the former of these, as Cyril describes this part of the action, they were placed towards the *west*, in a standing posture; and then commanded to renounce Satan by stretching out their hands against him, as if he were present. And the reason of this looking towards the west, he explains thus: "The west is the place of darkness, and Satan is darkness, and his strength is in darkness: for this reason ye symbolically look toward the west, when ye renounce

that prince of darkness and horror." Gregory Nazianzen observes, they did not only renounce the devil in words, but in their very habit and gesture; for they did it divested of their clothes, with their body turned to the west, and with hands stretched out against him: to which they sometimes added a striking of the hands together, and a spitting at their adversary, to express their abhorrence, as Dyonysius describes it; from whom we have the following curious account of the ceremony.—"The priest causes the person who is to be baptized to stand with his hands stretched out towards the west, and strike them together; (*tas cheiras apothounta*, which denotes the action to be with abhorrence.) Then he bids him *emphusēsai tris tō Satana*, thrice exsufflate, or spit, in defiance of Satan; afterwards, thrice repeating the solemn words of renunciation, he bids him renounce him in that form. Then he turns him about to the east, and, with his hands and eyes lifted up to heaven, bids him, *suntaxasthai tō Christo*, enter into covenant with Christ." Dion. de Hier. ch. ii.

This *Covenant* of obedience to Christ was the next thing required. The Greeks called it the giving themselves up to the government of Christ. Hence came that usual form of words in their profession, *suntattomai soi Christe;* "I give up myself to thee, O Christ! to be governed by thy laws!" The Latins commonly call it *promissum*, *pactum*, and *votum:* Hence it is termed a promise, hand-writing, a bond given to God, and recorded, not in the monuments of the dead, but in the book of the living.

The custom of turning to the east, when they made their *profession*, is mentioned by several writers, for which they assign two reasons:—1st, That as soon as they had renounced the devil, the Paradise of God, planted in the east, was laid open to them; of which their turning about from the west to the east, the region of light, was a symbol.—2d, Because the eastern, or rising sun, was an emblem of the sun of righteousness, to whom they were now turned from Satan.

With this profession of obedience, a *confession of faith* was also required of every person who came to be baptized; and this was always made in the words of the creed which the Church used for the instruction of its catechumens, they giving distinct answers to several questions with relation to baptism. And these were thought so necessary, that the Church never omitted them in baptism; for if the persons were able to speak, they answered for themselves; and if they were not, their *sponsors* answered for them; as will be shewn in the next chapter.

This profession was usually made in public, and before many witnesses; a circumstance grounded upon apostolical practice, and rarely dispensed with. *Primasius* upon 1 Tim. ch. vi. v. 12, deduces it from the example of Timothy; and *St. Austin* tells us, that at Romé, they used to make this *confession* to the Church publicly, and in some eminent place; though some-

times, to favour the modesty of very bashful persons, the presbyters received their *confession* in private.

There was one circumstance more, which, if true, added great weight to the solemnity; namely, that the party also subscribed his *confession*, if he was capable of writing, in the registers of the Church. This cannot however be positively asserted, though there are traces of such a practice in some ancient records. *Gregory Nazianzen*, Orat. 40 de Bapt. and *St. Ambrose* de Sacr. l. 1. c. 2. seem to allude to this custom; and *St. Austin* says, "The names of such as made their *profession* were written in the book of life, not only by men, but by the heavenly powers above." Yet *Chrysostom* has a passage seemingly contrary to this; for he says, that Christ requires no witnesses nor hand-writing of us, but only our bare word, to say, "*I renounce thee, Satan, and all thy pomp.*" Whence we may conclude that this custom was not universal, or that the fore-cited evidences are not so cogent as they seem to be.

[*To be continued.*]

THE SON OF DAVID.

JESUS asked them, saying, "What think ye of CHRIST? Whose son is he? They say unto him, the SON of DAVID.—Matt. ch. xxii. v. 41.

JESUS *of Nazareth*, who was crucified, was of the blood royal from *Zerobabel*, of the house of DAVID. JEWISH TALMUD.

IT *is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah;* and therefore *St. Matthew* and *St. Luke*, who reckon up his genealogy, the one through *Joseph*, his legal father; the other through *Mary*, his real mother, both deduce it from *Abraham*, and *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and from *David*, and *Zerobabel*, a descendant of *Solomon*, down to the event. And it is not to be imagined that a nation so addicted to genealogies as the Jews were, would be wanting in diligence, both in their private memoirs, and their public registers, to trace all the descendants from that illustrious *Shepherd of Israel*, on whose family God had entailed the crown, and from whose stock he had promised that the Messiah should proceed.

Yardley's Gen. of Christ, p. 173.

THE TIME OF MESSIAH's COMING.

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a Lawgiver from between his feet, till SHILO come.

FROM the death of *Jacob*, who uttered this prophecy, to the *Babylonish captivity*, this dominion in the *posterity* of *Judah*, especially over his own tribe, or descendants, either by *Judges* or *Kings*, is evident from scripture. And during the seventy years of their captivity at Babylon, several passages also of their scriptures give us to understand, that the *power* and *sceptre* of the tribe of *Judah*, relative to the being and subsistence of the tribe, were not removed: but that during the whole period of their captivity, they had *chiefs* and *elders* appointed by and from among themselves, who managed the affairs of their civil polity. And that the authority of the *Persian*, and other kings over them, after this, did not destroy the jurisdiction and polity of the Jews, or tribe of *Judah;* but that they subsisted still as a different people, under kings of their own, quite down to, and during, the time of the Asmonœan Princes; may be collected from several passages in the books of the *Maccabees*, and especially from the preambles of public leagues made by and with the Jews, which are there recorded.

But in the 38th year of *Augustus Cæsar*, *Archelaus*, the son of Herod, (a family who had by proselytism been long engrafted into the name and nation of the *Jews*, and thereby been made, at least, *adopted sons* of the tribe of *Judah*—See Prideaux's Con. vol. 2, p. 402 and 660;) this *Archelaus*, I say, who had reigned over the Jews for ten years, after the death of his father, and governed them according to the Jewish law, was, in the 38th year of the reign of the Emperor *Augustus*, summoned to *Rome*, to answer to an accusation of the Jews against him; and being there found guilty, was banished into *Gaul;* and *Quirinius*, or *Cyrenius*, (mentioned by St. Luke, ch. ii. v. 2) the Roman governor of *Syria* was sent by *Augustus* to seize *Judæa*, or the country of the *Jews*, and to reduce it into the form of a *Roman province;* and one *Coponius*, a *Roman*, was sent with him, to take upon him the government under the title of *Procurator of Judæa*, but in subordination to the President of *Syria*, a part of which province *Judæa* was made; so that now neither *Prince* nor *Governor* was left to *Judah*. The power of dominion, of life and death, was taken from them; and justice was from thenceforth always administered by the laws of *Rome*, instead of those of their own nation. The *sceptre* therefore was now surely departed from *Judah;* and *a Lawgiver had ceased from between his feet*. And consequently this was *the time* for the *Shilo to come*. And it merits particular observa-

tion, that this very year, this 38th of the reign of *Augustus*, was the year, when JESUS, being *twelve years of age*, was found *by his parents in the temple*, in the midst of the doctors.—St. Luke ii. It was then *the Lord whom they sought*, (though they would not know him) *came suddenly to his temple*: Mal. iii. 1. and there entered on his prophetic office, as Malichi had foretold.

But we have still a more determinate and fixed time set for Messiah's Advent. Daniel assures us (ch. ix. v. 25.) *that from the going forth of the commandment* (from the Persian Emperor) *to restore and build Jerusalem, unto Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and three score and two weeks;* that is, sixty-nine weeks in all; which, according to the prophetic way of reckoning 7 years to a week, amounts to 483 years. Now, whether these weeks commence from that decree which *Cyrus* made for the building of the *temple*, or from the new decree made by *Darius*, after that of *Cyrus* was prevented; or from the order that *Artaxerxes* gave for the re-building of the city; it is evident, that it is above two thousand years since either of them was made; and therefore the time, that the prophecy foretold that the *Messiah* should come, has been expired upwards of eighteen hundred years. And from the last of these orders, which was made in the 20th year of Artaxerxes *Longimanus*, king of *Persia*, to the baptism of *Jesus* (Nehem. ii. 1.) as far as we can learn from the best computations, there were just 483 years. After this, Daniel goes on to inform us, that in the middle of another, or of the 70th week (ch. ix. v. 25, 26.) the *Messiah should be cut off, but not for himself, and so should cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.* To the middle of another week must be three years and an half; and just so long after his baptism, did *Jesus* suffer death for the sins of the world, and thereby put an end to the Jewish rites and sacrifices.

Haggai and Malichi determine the *Advent* of the Messiah to be *during the standing of the second temple.* And yet it is certain from their own historians, that the second temple was utterly destroyed within forty years after the death of JESUS of Nazareth. 'Tis true indeed, that the *Jews* have attempted several times to rebuild their temple; but it is remarkable that God has as often miraculously interposed to prevent their doing it. An *earthquake* at one time, together with *stones* flying out from the foundation; and *globes of fire* at another time bursting forth from the earth, and destroying all that were so daring and presumptuous, as to undertake the work.

Laying every concurring evidence for the important truth before us—with propriety and joy, we may affirm that we have found HIM of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write, JESUS of Nazareth, the son of Joseph—the SON of DAVID—the BELOVED of the FATHER, full of grace and truth.

GLEANINGS OF
SELECT THOUGHTS, ANECDOTES AND EXTRACTS.

AUSTIN THE MONK.

OUR histories tell us, that when Austin, the Monk, came into Britain, from the Pope, to settle the Religion; and when some of the British Christians consulted with a grave, prudent man, whether they should join with him, and submit to his rules: "Yes, (saith he) if he be humble, do; but if he be proud, he is not of God."

DR. LIGHTFOOT.

IN the character which the honest Mr. Strype has given of this profound scholar and excellent divine, we meet with the following remarks, which deserve to be attended to, in these times.

"He set himself especially against such as made use of religion to supersede the duties of morality; and who upon pretence of higher attainments in Christianity, overlooked truth, honesty and righteousness. He could not bear such as made religion a pander to sin. And such sects there were who shewed their faces in his time. There were some that had refined religion to that degree, that they went all upon illuminations, revelations, and spiritual raptures, and talked of nothing, but of their being acted upon by the spirit of God, and doing all by some mighty influences of that spirit: poring so much upon these fancies, that they measured their own, and others' religion, according as they were endued with these enthusiastical flights: in the mean time made little or no account of moral duties; and were much addicted to unpeaceableness, covetousness, fraud, lying, deceiving, slandering, and such like."

N. COPERNICUS.

NICHOLAS COPERNICUS, whose researches ascertained the principle upon which the Newtonian system of philosophy rests, died at Thorn, the place of his nativity, in 1543. He is said to have expressed himself in the following manner just before his death:

Non parem Pauli gratiam requiro,
Veniam Petri nique Poseo; sed quam
In crucis ligno dederat latroni,
Sedulus oro.

These lines which are engraved on his tomb, are not without fault as a composition; but the deep piety they display, as it deserves to be long admired and remembered, so will it, we

trust, be imitated by other Christians. They may be thus translated :—

I seek not equal grace with Paul,
Nor Peter's pardon crave ;
But what the thief gain'd on the cross,
That I pray to have.

TRANSLATION OF A MOTTO.

THE pious and elegant turn given by Dr. Doddridge to his motto, *dum vivimus vivamus*, in a few verses, suggested to a gentleman the idea of making some on his own motto, *sanguis et vulnera*, which are as follow :—

SANGUIS ET VULNERA.

A motto of this bloody kind,
Some readers, without doubt, will say,
A mind, with thoughts of blood and wounds
But too well pleas'd, must needs display.

Yes, my good friends, you judge aright,
I freely own most true's the word,
In blood and wounds is all my joy,
But 'tis thy blood and wounds, O Lord !

TO THE EDITORS OF THE CHURCHMAN'S MAGAZINE.

Gentlemen,

As we have around us all sorts of *faiths*—and *no-faiths;* all sorts of *denominations, anything-arians* and *nothing-arians;*—all sorts of *preachers,* some *self-sent,* and others *people-sent;* permit me through the medium of your miscellany to lay before your readers the following reflections on *Lay Preaching,* and you will oblige a friend and constant reader.

OBSERVER.

ON LAY PREACHING, &c.

WHOEVER reads with any degree of attention the epistolary part of the New Testament, will be struck with the predictions which it contains, of an apostacy to take place in the last days from the Christian religion. The characters of this apostacy are pointed out in the clearest language: among which characters the following are some of not the least prominent. It is said, that people will have itching ears, or be fond of novelty in religious matters; that, for the gratification of this restless humour, they will heap to themselves teachers ; that these teachers will affect uncommon sanctity, as a convenient cloak to cover their sinister ends; that they and their abettors will speak evil of the way of truth, be disobedient to their civil and ecclesiastical rulers, and multiply divisions without cause among Christians.

With such scriptural predictions before us, should we blindly follow every one who, with an apparennt concern for our spiritual welfare, offers to be our guide in the path of salvation;—should we not rather distrust appearances, and, before we give any ear to new teachers, enquire carefully what authority they have to preach the gospel, whether they be qualified for the office, and whether the doctrine which they deliver be sound?

How shall they preach excpt they be sent? is a question which supposes that such as are not sent ought not to preach. A mission for this purpose is of two sorts, extraordinary and ordinary. The evidence of an extraordinary mission is ability to work miracles. An ordinary mission is conferred *only* by Episcopal ordination. For, to say nothing of the scriptures, which yet are more explicit on the subject than some wish to believe, every source of information which we have concerning ecclesiastical affairs, makes it as clear as noon-day, that Episcopacy is of divine institution, and that ordination is one of the exclusive privileges of the bishops of the Church. Hence, they who reject Episcopal ordination, and are unable to produce the evidence of an extraordinary mission, may call themselves ministers of Christ, but they have in reality no right to the sacred character. They are precisely under the Gospel what Korah and his associates were under the Law.

The people in general ought to know from their own ignorance, that they are not competent judges of the qualifications requisite for the execution of the pastoral office. Whatever, therefore, relates to this matter, they should leave to the judgment and determination of those, to whom, on account of their station in the Church, and their abilities, it properly belongs. But the people may know, that those persons are not qualified for the pastoral office, who undertake it not only without a regular mission, but also without going through that course of education, which has ever been deemed an indispensible preparation. If a man should take it into his head, that he could, for example, make shoes or weave cloth, without having learned those trades, common sense would tell the most illiterate, that the man was some how or other mistaken; and this consideration would prevent their employing him. And is it not equally evident to the common sense of every person, that they cannot, in the nature of things, be qualified to preach the gospel, who quit the counter, the awl, or the loom, to ascend the pulpit?

The teacher who does not recommend it to the people, to avoid dissention, and to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, neglects to deliver an important part of the gospel. The teacher who inculcates such an abstraction from the world, as neither the precepts nor the example of Christ require, nor the connections of man in society allow, misrepresents the gospel. The teacher who maintains, that a part of mankind is elected to life, and a part doomed to damnation by an absolute decree of

God, contradicts the gospel. He also contradicts the gospel, who maintains, that divine grace is irresistible in its operation on the human mind; that good works as conditions of salvation are of no significance, or that a sinner may know by a sudden impression made on his mind the moment of his conversion, and the certainty of his being pardoned. The proof is at hand, that the gospel is contradicted by these doctrines; for, the gospel informs us, "to our great and endless comfort," that God wills the salvation of all, that Christ died for all, and that the Holy Spirit is ready to assist all who comply with the evangelical terms of acceptance. The gospel warns us against resisting and quenching the Spirit, and assigns the doing so as the grand cause of the sins which mankind commit, and of the misery which they bring on themselves. The gospel represents Faith as a *practical* principle, and denies admission into the kingdom of God to those, whose faith does not appear in a godly, righteous, and sober life. In fine, the gospel assures us, that this life is a time of trial, of endurance, and of hope; and encourages us to depend on no other evidence of our being pardoned, and in a state of salvation, but that which arises from a conscious care to avoid sin, and to advance in piety and virtue.

The application is so obvious, that there is no necessity to point it out. In order, therefore, that the effect of it may not be lost, let us duly consider, that most of the divisions in the Christian world have been begun by slighting the Episcopal ordination, and are perpetuated upon such principles as render the great duty of union impracticable. The divisions among *Protestants* harden the *Romanist* in his errors, by leading him to view the reformation as a necessary source of endless separations and new doctrines. The unbeliever triumphs in them as so many proofs of the uncertainty of religious truth, and of the unfriendly nature of Christianity to the reason and peace of mankind. And the Jew, beholding the schisms and differences of opinion among Christians, is confirmed in his belief, that Christianity and Mahometanism stand upon similar grounds of imposture, and that the alcoran and the New Testament are equally ill-told stories, unworthy of his belief. And, therefore, *I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple.*"....Rom. xvi. v. 17, 18.

ODE TO WINTER.

1. WHAT! though thou com'st in sable mantle clad,
Yet, Winter! thou art welcome to my eye:
Thee here I hail, though terrors round thee wait,
And winds tempestuous howl along the sky.

2. But shall I then so soon forget the days,
When *Ceres* led me through her wheaten mines,
When Autumn pluck'd me, with his tawny hand,
Empurpled clusters from ambrosial vines!

3. So soon forget, when up the yielding pole
I saw ascend the silver-bearded hop;
When Summer, waving high her crown of hay,
Pour'd o'er the mead her odorif'rous crop.

4. I must forget them—and thee too, O spring!
Though many a chaplet thou hast weav'd for me.
For now prepar'd to quit th' enchanting scenes,
Cold, weeping Winter! I come all to thee.

5. Hail to thy rolling clouds, and rapid storms!
Though they deform fair Nature's lovely face.
Hail to thy winds, that sweep along the earth!
Though trees they root up from their solid base.

6. How sicklied over is the face of things!
Where is the spice-kiss of the southern gale?
Where the wild rose, that smil'd upon the thorn?
The mountain flow'r, and lilly of the vale?

7. How gloomy 'tis to cast the eye around,
And view the trees disrob'd of ev'ry leaf,
The velvet path grown rough with clotting show'rs,
And ev'ry field depriv'd of ev'ry sheaf!

8. How far more gloomy o'er the hail-beat heath,
Alone to travel in the dead of night!
No twinkling star to gild the arch of heav'n,
No moon to lend her temporary light:

9. To see the lightning spread its ample sheet,
Discern the wild waste through its liquid fire,
To hear the thunder rend the troubled air,
As Time itself and Nature would expire.

10. And yet, O Winter! has thy poet seen
Thy face as smooth, and placid as the Spring,
Has felt, with comfort felt, the beam of heav'n,
And heard thy vallies and thy woodlands ring.

11. What time the sun with burnish'd looks arose,
The long-lost charms of Nature to renew,
When pearls of ice bedeck'd the grassy turf,
And tree-tops floated in the silver dew.

12. Father of Heav'n and Earth! this change is thine;
By thee the seasons in gradation roll;

Thou great omniscient ruler of the world!
Thou Alpha and Omega of the whole!

13. Here, humbly bow we down our heads to thee!
'Tis ours the voice of gratitude to raise,
Thine to diffuse thy blessings o'er the land;
Thine to receive the incense of our praise.

14. Pure if it rises from the conscious heart,
With thee forever does the symbol live.
Though small for all thy love is man's return,
Thou ask'st no more, than he has pow'r to give.

HYMN FOR THE NEW YEAR.

I.

MY days, and weeks, and months, and years,
Fly rapid as the whirling spheres,
Around the steady pole.
Time, like the tide, its motion keeps,
Till I shall launch those boundless deeps,
Where endless ages roll!

II.

Lord, at thy footstool here I bow,
And humbly beg assistance now,
To know my real estate;
While, life, and health, and time endure,
Fain would I make my heav'n secure,
Before it be too late.

III.

If in destruction's road I stray,
Help me to choose that better way,
That leads to joy on high;
My soul renew, my sins forgive,
Nor let me ever dare to live,
Such as I dare not die!

IV.

Oh! grant thy grace to change my heart,
Thy beams of comfort, Lord, impart,
To guide my future days:
Thy blessing grant, and make me see
How great my obligations be,
To live and speak thy praise.

V.

With thee let ev'ry day be pass'd,
And when that comes, which is my last,
May glory dawn within;
Then clear my hopes of ev'ry doubt,
And e're life's glimm'ring lamp is out,
Let endless joys begin.